THE MADRAS LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY

Wednesday, the 10th September 1958.

The House met in the Assembly Chamber, Fort St. George, at nine of the clock, Mr. Speaker (THE HON. DR. U. KRISHNA RAU) in the Chair.

I.—QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS.

STARRED QUESTIONS.

Robbery at Kodambakkam Railway Station

* 2 *S.N.Q.*—SRI T. T. DANIEL : Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether the Electric Train at Kodambakkam Railway Station was stopped on 8th September 1958 by dacoits and whether the dacoits committed robbery of money, jewels and other valuables from the passengers in the train;

(*b*) the circumstances and the manner under which the above dacoity was committed;

(*c*) how many were injured;

(*d*) how many were passengers in the train and how many were railway employees among them;

(*e*) how many passengers were in the train when the dacoits stopped the electric train and committed dacoity;

(*f*) what is the estimated cost of the jewels and other valuables which were robbed by the dacoits;

(*g*) what is the nature of relief given to the injured by the Government; and

(*h*) what action the Police have taken on this matter?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM : (*a*) to (*h*) The case is under investigation. The facts are as follows :—

On 8th September 1958 at about 1-15 p.m., the Assistant Station Master, Sri Ramanujam Nair was on duty at the Kodambakkam Railway Station marking parcels. While he was thus occupied, a passenger entered the Assistant Station Master's room and reported to him that his pocket had been picked and Rs. 30 removed while he was detraining from a down train. The Assistant Station Master asked him for a written complaint for passing on to the Police and took up the phone at the same time to inform the Railway Police. At that time, three young men, aged below 30 years, suddenly entered the room. Two of them approached the table and the third took up position by the door. One of the two near the table addressed the Assistant Station Master " So, you are going to phone to the Police—Are you? " and whipping out a knife from under his shirt cut the Assistant Station Master twice on his right forearm. The second man also took out a knife and

cut the telephone wire. Just then electric train No. 98 arrived and the three persons in the room threatened the Assistant Station-master saying that he should not go to the platform to contact the Guard or Driver. As the train left the station, the Assistant Station Master from his room showed his injured arm to the Guard of the departing train and asked him to report the incident to the Railway Control and the Police. Three other persons with lathies in their hands were also seen on the platform intimidating the passengers who waited for the train. As soon as the train left, the Assistant Station Master saw the three persons in his room rushing out and jumping over the eastern wall of the railway premises and making good their escape.

There are no reports that these rowdies had relieved any of the passengers of train No. 98 of their money. The Assistant Station-master also reports that two passengers have stated that they have received injuries in the confusion on the platform. Enquiries made in the neighbouring clinics in Kodambakkam show that one person was attended to for a simple hit-wound on his head.

An official message regarding this incident received from the Southern Railway shows that the train was not detained. The Press report that the driver of the train had been pulled out of his cabin and man-handled is not correct.

'93' Police arrived at the scene at about 1-45 p.m. The crowd who had caught a person running away from the station handed him over to the '93' Police. His name is Anandan alias Paramanandam, a K.D. of Egmore, with seven previous convictions. He has given information that one Adimoolam and one Selvaraj, rowdies of Chetput are involved in this incident.

* 3 *S.N.Q.*—Sri K. VINAYAKAM: Will the Hon. the Minister for Home be pleased to state—

(*a*) whether it is a fact that a daring robbery took place in Kodambakkam railway station on 8th September 1958;

(*b*) how many passengers were assaulted by the miscreants;

(*c*) whether the miscreants used any deadly weapons; and

(*d*) how many were arrested in this connexion?

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: (*a*) to (*d*) The attention of the hon. Member is invited to the answer given to Short Notice Question No. 2.

Sri T. T. DANIEL: May I know from the Hon. Minister whether there was any occurrence at Nungambakkam Railway Station before the occurrence at Kodambakkam and whether the Police arrived at the spot soon after the occurrence? May I also know whether the public chased anybody and caught anybody immediately at the spot?

The Hon. Sri M. BHAKTAVATSALAM: Only now I hear the report about the Nungambakkam incident. I do not have any further particulars besides what I have just now given.